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Lindley Murray (1745–1826), Quaker *and* Grammarian

At the end of the eighteenth century, which is commonly considered as a key period for the standardisation of the English language, the American-born Quaker Lindley Murray (1745–1826) compiled his *English Grammar* (1795). The book was widely used for decades since, was translated into many languages, and became the best-selling grammar of all times, with sales figures that even according to today's standards are considered highly impressive.

The present study first and foremost investigates who Murray was, and what led him to compile this grammar and many other textbooks. In the process, several previous misconceptions have been set straight by the author. Murray's life as a Quaker is painted in great detail, together with the effect his religious outlook had on his writings. To this end, a corpus of 262 of his autograph letters was compiled and analysed for his usage. This has additionally resulted in insight into several features of typical Quaker usage that were prescribed at the time, and to which Murray adhered. As the second part of this study, Murray's language use as found in these letters is compared to a selection of the rules laid down in the *English Grammar*. Here we see that Murray, although he was language conscious, did not always follow these rules.

The findings in this book will be of interest to scholars in various fields, such as social history, and book and publishing studies, but they will be especially important for sociohistorical linguists with an interest in language use in England, in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

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